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PYROGENICS, INC.

A Study of the Use of Vapor and Vacuum Deposition Technique For The Development Of High Strength Filamentary Materials

Quarterly Progress Report No. 1 Period: April 22, 1964 through July 22, 1964 August 15, 1964

Prepared Under National Aeronautics and Space Administration Contract No. NASw-927

Reported by: 0.00.3...lll

J. R. Bedell

Approved by: No. li. A

Introduction:

Considerable research effort has been expended in recent years on the development of refractory high strength filamentary materials. Such materials when produced by evaporative or vapor conversion methods, have shown great promise, but have either not been dimensionally continuous, or have been limited in their strengths by the natures of the continuous substrates upon which they have been deposited.

Extremely high strength graphite whiskers of limited length have been generated via sublimation from a carbon arc by R. Bacon⁽¹⁾, and gas reaction graphite whiskers of similar geometric limitations and lower strengths have been produced by Meyer⁽²⁾ and by Papaleges and Bourdeau⁽³⁾. Gas reaction coatings of pyrolytic graphite have been deposited on graphite yarns by Higgs⁽⁴⁾ et al, Papalegis⁽³⁾ and others, but the irregularities of the substrate surfaces have limited the product strength. Strong, extremely flexible sheet filaments of pyrolytic graphite have been produced by Robba⁽⁵⁾, but these have yet to be generated in continuous form in thicknesses which will optimize strength.

Silicon carbide whiskers, produced by gas conversion, have possessed high strength, but have been non-uniform in physical properties and of limited lengths (6).

This contract was initiated with a thorough survey of literature pertaining to synthesis, treatment and properties of pyrolytic materials. N64-28837

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A reference survey is presented in this report, indicating types of information available from various sources and designating, where possible, the pages upon which such information can be found.

Surveillance of this literature has indicated that the strengths of whiskers coatings and massive pyrolytic graphite deposits have been strongly influenced by three parameters:

- 1. Substratum Surface.
- 2. Specimen Thickness
- 3. Subsequent Treatment (i.e. annealing, hot and cold work)

author

Smooth substratums, thin deposits, and good orientation through treatment should provide an optimum pyrolytic filament. This program will consider these three parameters in the development of high strength filaments.

Approach:

The surface upon which pyrolytic graphite shall be deposited will receive first attention in the course of this study.

Control of thickness and manner of deposition shall subsequently be considered. Improvement of properties by annealing and working shall then be attempted.

The substratum for pyrolytic deposition which will receive first consideration shall be a liquid surface. The deposition of a sheet filament upon a liquid surface suggests several useful applications to the production of strong continuous filament:

- 1. The surface should shear readily to permit continuous withdrawal of graphite film as it is generated over the liquid.
- 2. This ease of shearing may also permit fairly thin pyrolytic films to be generated and withdrawn without danger of rupture.
- 3. A liquid surface should maintain itself relatively free of imperfections and contribute strongly to the integrity and strength of film deposits.
- 4. By virtue of its perfection, a liquid surface should tend to be non-nucleating, and may thus permit an uninterrupted, continuous growth of graphite, initiated from a pyrolytic graphite seed.
- 5. A film grown on such a surface should be relatively free of those stresses often introduced by an unyielding, solid substratum.

A material which may serve as a liquid substratum for pyrolytic deposition of graphite must fulfill several requirements: It should be molten at graphite deposition temperatures; it must be incapable of forming carbides; it should have low solubility for carbon; its vapor pressure at graphite deposition temperatures should be negligible. Platinum possesses these properties, and experimental equipment is now being assembled to test the feasibility of pyrolysis on molten platinum. Should this approach be feasible, deposit properties as affected by deposition parameters shall be studied, and modifications shall be introduced to develop continuous filament approaches.

One alternate approach to substratum studies, which may be pursued if deposition on liquid metal is not feasible, will be the improvement of surface finish of graphite yarn prior to pyrolytic deposition.

Pyrolytic graphite coatings on batches of graphite yarn have been generated by Papalegis and Bourdeau⁽³⁾, continuous coatings on graphite yarn by Higgs, et al⁽⁴⁾, and continuous coatings on tungsten wire by Hough⁽⁷⁾, in fulfillment of contracts for Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, but the effects of substrate modification have not been determined.

This approach will undertake to dissolve trace quantities of graphite from fiber surfaces by attack with boiling mercury, tin or zinc to reduce irregularities on the substrate, and permit a controlled comparison of deposit strengths.

Other substratums which will be considered are polished rhenium and tantalum. Rhenium does not carburize, and, with its high temperature capability, may provide a very satisfactory surface for film deposition. Tantalum, which forms a tight, thin carbide film, also has promise as a deposition surface. A small quantity of rhenium foil has been ordered, and the tantalum is on hand.

Nickel foil has also been ordered in preparation for another approach to this program. At temperatures below the melting point of nickel (1453°C), carbon shall be pyrolytically deposited upon the nickel surface and subsequently the substratum shall be selectively etched away or evaporated. Attempts shall then be made to graphitize the pyrolytic carbon residue.

Continuous generation of graphite whisker by the stressing of filament above 3000°C shall be attempted. Carbon is to be supplied by sublimation from a hot graphite ring susceptor to the nucleation site from which the whisker is drawn. It is intended that stress and rapid diffusion of carbon along the whisker "a" planes to the nucleation site shall effect the continuous growth of whisker.

Following the determination of appropriate deposition surfaces, the limits of deposition thickness and their effects upon strength and integrity shall be explored.

The filamentary materials will then be subjected to annealing and working for improvement of properties. It is anticipated that thin deposits, being less prone to self-restriction of ordering, will permit better reorientation of structure by treatment.

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19	Yes	PG.		78	79			
18	Yes	PG 86, 87, 88		87,90	79, 87, 88, 90	88,89		
17	Yes	PG 18, 19				18, 19, 20		
16	Yes	Pg. 19		15, 16	15, 16	19,20		
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23		Boron PG	-		3,4	3,4	5, 6, 7	2.8
22	Yes	PG	100			100		
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29	Yes	PG Whsks.		TI				k _								
29	Yes	PG V 816,817,920								816,817						
28	Yes	PG 468	468	469												
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3.8	Yes	Al ₂ O ₃	299		
37	Yes				
36	Yes				
35	Yes	., PG	61-6,69,70,72,73,74		
34		ATJ Graph., PG Pg.	61-6,69,	ıre,	
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45		PG 168, 169	168, 169			168-170	
44	Yes	other mtrl.	7		13	×	
43	Yes						
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54		PG			467	469,470	
53		Graphite Whisks. 29,30					
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85 86	Yes	PG PG			5					2, 4, 5		3			·	
84	Yes	PG 2.1	26	25						24,25,						
83	Yes	PG	×		6, 7, 15		4, 15, 17		10	7, 13, 19 20, 21		3				
82	Yes	PG	52, 56, 54	1, 8 8, 56	8,54	9, 11			8.26	3				Emissivity, Specific Ht.,		
81	Yes	PG 171-174, 177, 178			173, 174, 176											
80	Yes	Bromine PG Pg. X			×					,						
Reference No.	Comment	Material Synthesis	Treatment Thermal	Conductivity Electrical Conductivity	Thermal Expansion	Elastic	Hardness	Stress, Rupture,	Density	Lattice, Structure, X-Ray	Dislocations Oxidation	Resistance Metallography	Chemical	Other		

Comment

able amounts of carbon which precipitate on cooling in the form of

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10.	W.V. Kotlensky and D.B. Fischbach "Space Program Summary" Report No. 37-17, Vol. IV, JPL, Oct. 30, 1962	
11.	A.W. Thompson "Space Program Summary" Report No. 37-21, Vol. IV, JPL, June 30, 1963	Flexure Testing of PG
12.	D.B. Fischbach, W.V. Kotlensky and A.W. Thompson "Space Program Summary: Report No. 37-22, Vol. IV, JPL, Aug. 31, 1963	Orientation vs. strength and ductility; 2-stage deformation.
13.	D.B. Fishbach "Space Program Summary" Report No. 37-24, Vol. IV, JPL, Dec. 31, 1963	
14	W.V. Kotlensky "Space Program Summary" Report No. 37-25, Vol. IV, JPL, Feb. 29, 1964	Mechanical forming of PG. Activation energy studies for PG formation, p. 43, 44, 45
15.	"Research Summary" Report No. 36-4, Vol. II, JPL, Sept. 1, 1960.	Kinking effect by tensile test. Effects of heating and deformation on graphitization.
16.	"Research Summary" Report No. 36-5 Vol. II., JPL, Nov. 1, 1960	Growth Data
17.	"Research Summary" Report No. 36-6, Vol. II., JPL, Jan. 2, 1961	Discussion of structure of PG and crystalline Graphite.
18.	"Research Summary" Report No. 36-8, Vol. IV, JPL, May 1, 1961	Discussion (p. 90,91) of orientation, structure and deformation.
19.	"Research Summary" Report No. 36-10, Vol. I, JPL, Aug. 1, 1961	Effects of strain rate. Effects of growth cones upon strength.
20.	"Research Summary" Report No. 36-11, JPL, Nov. 1, 1961	
21	"Research Summary" Report No. 36-12, Vol. I, JPL, Jan. 2, 1962.	

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22	"Research Summary" Report No. 36-13 JPL, March 1, 1962	"Elimination of growth cone structure" p 99
23	W. V. Kotlensky and H.E. Martens, "Structural and High Temperature Tensile Properties of Boron Pyrolytic Graphite", Report No. 32-299, JPL, Dec. 16, 1963	Good reference source for structural studies of PG
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